



Community of Christ

GREATER PACIFIC NORTHWEST USA MISSION CENTER

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Dear Pastors and Communications Coordinators:

The purpose of this letter is to remind and inform you to:

1. Share Mission Center Conference information and new business
2. Solicit names for nomination, elect, and report MC Conference delegates and identify representative flag bearer
3. Promote self-nominations for World Conference 2016 delegates
4. Register online for Pastors' Breakfast
5. Promote Mission Center activities
6. Record and report attendance for all worship services in October
7. Submit Bold Moves applications
8. Elect/sustain and report congregational officers

→ SHARE MISSION CENTER CONFERENCE INFORMATION AND NEW BUSINESS

Now is the time to promote the dates and location of Mission Center Conference in your bulletins each week. (See enclosed flyer with schedule.)

2015 GPNW-USA Mission Center Conference

Saturday, November 7, 9:30 am to Sunday, November 8, 12:30 pm

Portland Congregation, 4837 NE Couch St., Portland OR 97213

Conference Highlights

Our Conference theme is *Express Joy in Christ*, who is the source of blessing and joy in our lives. In this time of transitions within Community of Christ, we are especially reminded of the call to give joy for the ways that we are blessed as a Mission Center. Being engaged in the mission of Jesus Christ brings joy to the lives of those we encounter, as well as ourselves. Psalm 150 reminds us to, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Throughout the Conference weekend, we will explore the ways that we can praise the Lord by expressing the joy that is resident in community, mission, unity, diversity, relationships, and especially in Jesus Christ.

Our guest ministers will be **Robin Linkhart**, President of Seventy Apostle Designate, and **John VanDerWalker**, Mission Support Leader. We will elect delegates for World Conference and participate in the Setting Apart of new Mission Center President **Mike Bessonette**.

Special Events

- **Youth and Young Adult Pizza and Game Night**, Saturday, 6:30-10 pm, at the home of Marsha and Paul ShortWebb—a special evening of fun, fellowship and laughter for Junior High and Senior High Youth and Young Adults, making person pizzas and playing games (*flyer attached*)
- **Pastors' Breakfast**, Sunday, 7:30-9:15 am, at The Grotto—a sharing time for our guest ministry and congregations in mission (*flyer attached for pastors*)
- **Mission Worship**, Sunday, 9:45-10:30 am, at Portland Congregation—highlighting examples of mission in congregations of the Mission Center

Pastor's Calendar / Checklist:

- Now**—Share Mission Center Conference information and new business
- Now**—Solicit names for MC Conference delegate nominations
- Now**—Promote self-nominations for World Conference 2016 delegate nominations
- Now**—Promote MC activities:
 - Young Adult Retreat, Oct. 2-4
 - Preaching Workshop at University Place, Oct. 10-11
 - NW Singles Retreat, Oct. 23-25
 - Sr. High Youth Retreat, Nov. 13-15
- Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25**—Record attendance each Sunday
- By Oct. 15**—Submit Bold Moves applications
- By Oct. 18**—Hold MC Conference delegate elections
- By Oct. 20**—Report MC Conference delegates to Jill Brunette
- By Oct. 23**—Register online for Pastors' Breakfast in Portland
- After Nov. 8**—Schedule time for MC Conference delegate report
- By Nov. 22**—Hold congregational officer elections
- By Dec. 7**—Report 2016 congregational officers to Jill Brunette and Mike Bessonette
- By Dec. 7**—Report October 2015 attendance figures online
- By Dec. 31**—Have your 2016 Congregational Budget approved

New Business: Mission Center Staffing

The downsizing at the World Church level has had a significant impact on Mission Center staffing. We will now fund the Mission Center President position in the Mission Center budget beginning in 2016. **Mike Bessonette** fills this position. The new USA Model for Mission will impact the Mission Center Financial Officer (MCFO) position and **Bill McFarlin**. In addition to serving GPNW, Bill will serve as the primary Administrative Support Minister for three Mission Centers and Interim MCFO for another Mission Center. **Sean Langdon** will move to full-time from .75, and his ministry areas will include Mission Coordinator, Camping Ministries Director, Congregational Support Minister, and Youth Ministries Specialist. **Pam Cress** has joined Mission Center staff, and her ministry areas will include Pastor Support, Adult Formation and Learning, and Congregational Support Minister.

Jill Brunette has been hired as the Membership Services Administrator, replacing **Kim Naten** and assuming significant financial responsibilities—many of which had been associated with the Financial Assistant position, held by **Dianne Webberley**. Dianne continues to serve in a reduced capacity as an assistant to the MCFO for key responsibilities. Communications Administrator **Karen Beckman** (whose job did not change) and many self-sustaining ministers will richly support our ministry in the Mission Center. We will continue to be blessed by **Christie Ostendorp**, **Kathy Sharp**, **Christian Skoorsmith** and **Steve Pomeroy**, who will serve the Mission Center in self-sustaining capacities.

New Business: Proposed 2016 Mission Center Budget

Included with this letter is a variety of financial documents, including the Proposed 2016 Operating/Missional Budget to share and review with your delegates and congregation prior to Mission Center Conference. (*See attachments.*) This proposed 2016 budget is \$600 less than 2015, while also including new funding for the Mission Center President position. For additional information regarding proposed changes to the 2016 budget, please see the Proposed 2016 Budget Explanation. (*See attachment.*)

Since its inception, the Mission Center has used the Presiding Bishop's recommended rate of 6% for use of investment fund earning for budgets. Their recommendation now is to use less than 6%, and other key leaders and investment experts indicate that 5% is a more sustainable usage rate given the changes in the market over the past several years. It is also recommended that a five-year rolling average of investment balances be used when including investment earnings to fund budgets. As a result of these recommendations, we will use 5% as our base rate for investment earnings for budget support for 2016 and will start using the five-year rolling average for our Affiliate Investment Pool (AIP) balance.

For the past several years, the Mission Center has used unrealized equity in real estate as part of our asset portfolio when computing the investment draw to be used for the operating budget. The intent was for this to be a short-term strategy, with the expectation that those properties would sell within a year or two and be converted to cash, to be invested in the AIP account. Unfortunately, the real estate market has been rather volatile in those intervening years, and the properties have not sold as anticipated. Fortunately, we have used conservative values for the properties and now have parties interested in purchasing each of the remaining properties that make up the real estate portion of our asset portfolio (Lincoln City and Bellevue). We hope that these properties will be sold within the next year.

New Business: Your Congregation's Proposed Allocation

Attached to this letter is the Proposed 2016 Congregational Allocations. (*See attachment.*) The total allocations will remain unchanged from 2015; however, each individual congregation's allocation will change as a result of the application of the allocation formula. Increases and decreases to congregational allocations are limited to ten percent (10%) to provide stability in budgeting for congregations. Your congregation's allocation will not increase or decrease by more than 10% when compared with this current year. Be sure to review the document entitled "Understanding Your Congregation's 2016 Allocation" to see how allocations are computed. (*See attachment.*)

The allocations are simply a starting point for expressing generosity toward the collective mission of your Mission Center. The formula used for the allocation does not include investment earnings or income from other sources such as facilities rentals or fundraisers that congregations may have. To help keep allocations as low as possible, we continue to request additional contributions to the Mission Center from congregations that may have additional capacity (Congregational Generosity), from emerging groups (Expansion Groups), and from members and friends of the Mission Center (Operating & Youth Contributions). The 2016 budget anticipates an increase of \$5,000 in giving through Congregational Generosity, an increase of \$5,000 in individual giving through Operating and Youth Contributions, and an increase of \$300 in giving from Expansion Groups. We are grateful for the response so many have made, and continue to make, in support of our shared mission.

New Business: Financial Resolutions

We will consider three resolutions regarding financial matters. (*See attachments.*) The resolution entitled "Carry 2015 Funds Forward into 2016 and 2017" is designed to allow the Mission Center to use the net savings from 2015 for the benefit

of the 2016 and 2017 annual operating budgets. During 2015, we have had financial savings from the retirement of several individuals and from the restructuring and temporary vacancy of some positions. As a result, additional funds will be available to return the unused \$15,500 additional draw and then to make the remaining balance available for use in 2016 and 2017.

The resolution entitled "Disposition of Lake Louise, Alaska Real Estate Sale Net-Proceeds" is to comply with World Church policy regarding the disposition of campground capital asset sale net-proceeds. The pending sale of Lake Louise Campground in Alaska is nearing closure, so it is appropriate that this Conference approve this resolution to allow the distribution of the funds once the sale is complete. Since the campground ceased operating 12 years ago, the field apostles for the area have reiterated their combined commitment to have the net proceeds of the sale of the campground benefit ongoing ministries and initiatives of Community of Christ in Alaska. This resolution provides for the distribution of those funds in a way that is consistent with that expressed commitment and is supported by key leaders in Alaska.

The resolution entitled "Disposition of Klamath Falls, Oregon Real Estate Sale Net-Proceeds" is to comply with World Church policy regarding the disposition of capital asset sale net-proceeds of closing or closed congregations. This resolution simply recognizes the established practice of the Mission Center in regard to the disposition of these types of funds.

If you have questions about the proposed budget, your congregation's allocation or any of these resolutions, contact Mission Center Financial Officer **Bill McFarlin** (360-574-2758, wmcfarlin@cofchrist-gpnw.org).

→ SOLICIT NAMES FOR NOMINATION, ELECT, AND REPORT MISSION CENTER CONFERENCE DELEGATES AND IDENTIFY REPRESENTATIVE FLAG BEARER

Solicit names now for your congregation's Mission Center Conference delegate nominations. Announce your congregational business meeting to elect Conference delegates and alternates **at least two weeks in advance** of the meeting. This business meeting should occur *no later* than **Sunday, October 18**. Any member "in good standing" with membership within the GPNW Mission Center is eligible to run for delegate.

List all nominations on a prepared ballot, which also notes the number of delegates to elect from your congregation. Members may nominate others as "write-ins" during the business meeting and may vote for as many nominees *as can be elected*. Those receiving the most votes—up to the number of delegates allotted to your congregation—are elected. (*See attachment with your updated delegate allotment.*) Remaining nominees will serve as alternates, in descending order of votes received. We often are able to change alternates into voting delegates from other congregations before Conference.

Immediately notify your delegates and alternates of their election, and report the names of your elected delegates and alternates (prioritized by highest to lowest votes received) to Membership Services Administrator **Jill Brunette** (425-207-8712, jbrunette@cofchrist-gpnw.org) by **Tuesday, October 20**. (Please use attached Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form; complete delegate information can also be emailed.) If you are unable to elect your full delegate allotment, inform Jill whether your delegate openings can be filled by elected alternates from a specific congregation or by any alternates.

We will kick off Mission Center Conference with our traditional opening Flag Processional. Your delegate election is the perfect opportunity to identify a representative flag bearer from your congregation. **Sean Langdon** (425-293-6366, slangdon@cofchrist-gpnw.org) will contact you for your representative's name. Please plan to have this information ready for him by **Tuesday, October 20**.

Please schedule congregational time AFTER Mission Center Conference for your delegates to report action by the Conference to your congregation.

→ NEW BUSINESS: PROMOTE SELF-NOMINATION FOR WORLD CONFERENCE 2016 DELEGATES

Please make the following announcement (both verbally and printed in your bulletins) to your congregation: "Those interested in serving as a delegate to World Conference (June 4-11, 2016) should submit their name, congregation, and contact information to **Jill Brunette** (425-207-8712, jbrunette@cofchrist-gpnw.org) by **Monday, October 28**. Ballots containing the names of all delegate nominees will be prepared in advance of Mission Center Conference; however, nominations will also be taken from the floor at the Saturday business session. Election of World Conference delegates will occur at the afternoon business session on Saturday, November 7, at Portland Congregation. GPNW Mission Center has been allocated 82 delegates for World Conference. Find information and preparatory materials at www.cofchrist.org/2016-world-conference.

→ REGISTER ONLINE FOR PASTORS' BREAKFAST

Pastors, register now for our annual **Pastors' Breakfast** from **7:30-9:15 am** on **Sunday, November 8**, at **The Grotto**, a Catholic spiritual and event center. **Space is limited, so be sure to register early**. The Grotto Conference Center is located near Portland Congregation at North East Sandy Boulevard and North East 85th Avenue (www.thegrotto.org). Look for your invitation in this packet and again by email, and remember to register online as indicated by **Friday, October 23**.

→ PROMOTE MISSION CENTER ACTIVITIES

We have a number of retreats this fall throughout the Mission Center. Please help us promote these events by posting the enclosed flyers and announcing them in your bulletins.

→ RECORD AND REPORT ATTENDANCE FOR ALL WORSHIP SERVICES IN OCTOBER

Please track your congregation's attendance for **each regular worship service in October**. After the last Sunday in October, please enter these attendance numbers online by visiting www.surveymonkey.com/r/AttendOct by **Monday, December 7**. With all the changes in staffing this year, we will not conduct a Pastor Survey, but will instead use the data from last year's survey as a guide. We will conduct a Pastor Survey again in 2016.

→ SUBMIT BOLD MOVES APPLICATIONS

The Bold Moves Grant Committee awarded new grants to several congregations last spring. Now is the time for others to start working on new or renewing grant applications, due **Thursday, October 15**. Previous grant winners may reapply two more times. Find information under "Ministries > Bold Moves" on our Mission Center website (www.cofchrist-gpnw.org) or contact **Steve Pomeroy** (425- 641-8876, spomeroy@cofchrist-gpnw.org). Links to World Church and Western Field grants for Mission and Tangible Love also can be found on this webpage, so you can supplement Bold Moves funds for bigger projects.

→ ELECT/SUSTAIN AND REPORT CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS AND APPROVE CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET

Coordinate now with your Congregational Support Minister to schedule pastor elections and sustain your congregational Recorder, Congregational Financial Officer (CFO), and Assistant Pastors. Announce this business meeting at least two weeks in advance. By now you should have received appointment letters for your Recorder and CFO from Bill McFarlin. If you are stepping down as pastor for 2016, please notify your Congregational Support Minister and me as soon as possible to identify your likely successor(s).

Officer elections should occur by **Sunday, November 22** (before the Advent season) to allow for sufficient planning, recruiting, and budgeting. Please notify **Jill Brunette** (425-207-8712, jbrunette@cofchrist-gpnw.org) and copy me (541-350-6654, mbessonette@cofchrist-gpnw.org) with all election results by **Monday, December 7**. **Please be sure to report election results even if there are no changes.** Also, be sure to have your congregation's 2016 budget approved by **Thursday, December 31**.

In the midst of the World Church budget challenges, we are reminded that God's mission continues around the world—beckoning us on. Thank you for your ongoing support of the mission of the church and for your willingness to reevaluate your true capacity in support of our shared mission here in the GPNW and around the world. Your financial giving to your congregation, your Mission Center, and your World Church allows others to experience the peace of Jesus Christ as never before.

As your new Mission Center President, I look forward to meeting and working with old and new friends and disciples throughout the Mission Center. My testimony is that God is alive and working in the lives of disciples and congregations in our congregations, Mission Center, church and world. May you sense God's blessings in your ministry efforts.



Mike Bessonette, GPNW Mission Center President

Enclosures:

- MC Conference: Flyer with Schedule
- MC Conference: Youth/Young Adult Saturday Event Flyer
- MC Conference: Pastors' Breakfast Invitation to Pastors
- MC Conference: Proposed 2016 Operating/Missional Budget
- MC Conference: Proposed 2016 Budget Explanation
- MC Conference: GPNW 2014 Audit Cover Letter
- MC Conference: 2015 Balance Sheet
- MC Conference: 2015 Income-Expense Report
- MC Conference: Proposed 2016 Congregational Allocations
- MC Conference: Understanding Your Congregation's 2016 Allocation
- MC Conference: Proposed Resolution to Carry 2015 Funds Forward into 2016 and 2017
- MC Conference: Proposed Resolution Regarding Disposition of Lake Louise, Alaska Real Estate Sale Net-Proceeds
- MC Conference: Proposed Resolution Regarding Disposition of Klamath Falls, Oregon Real Estate Sale Net-Proceeds
- MC Conference: Delegate Allotment and Formula
- MC Conference: Delegate-Alternate Submittal Form
- Young Adult Fall 2015 Retreat Flyer
- Preaching Workshop Flyer
- Northwest Singles Fall 2015 Retreat Flyer
- GPNW Youth Fall 2015 Retreat Flyer
- Visiting Ministry 4th Quarter 2015 Schedule
- 2016 Youth Camps and Reunions Flyer